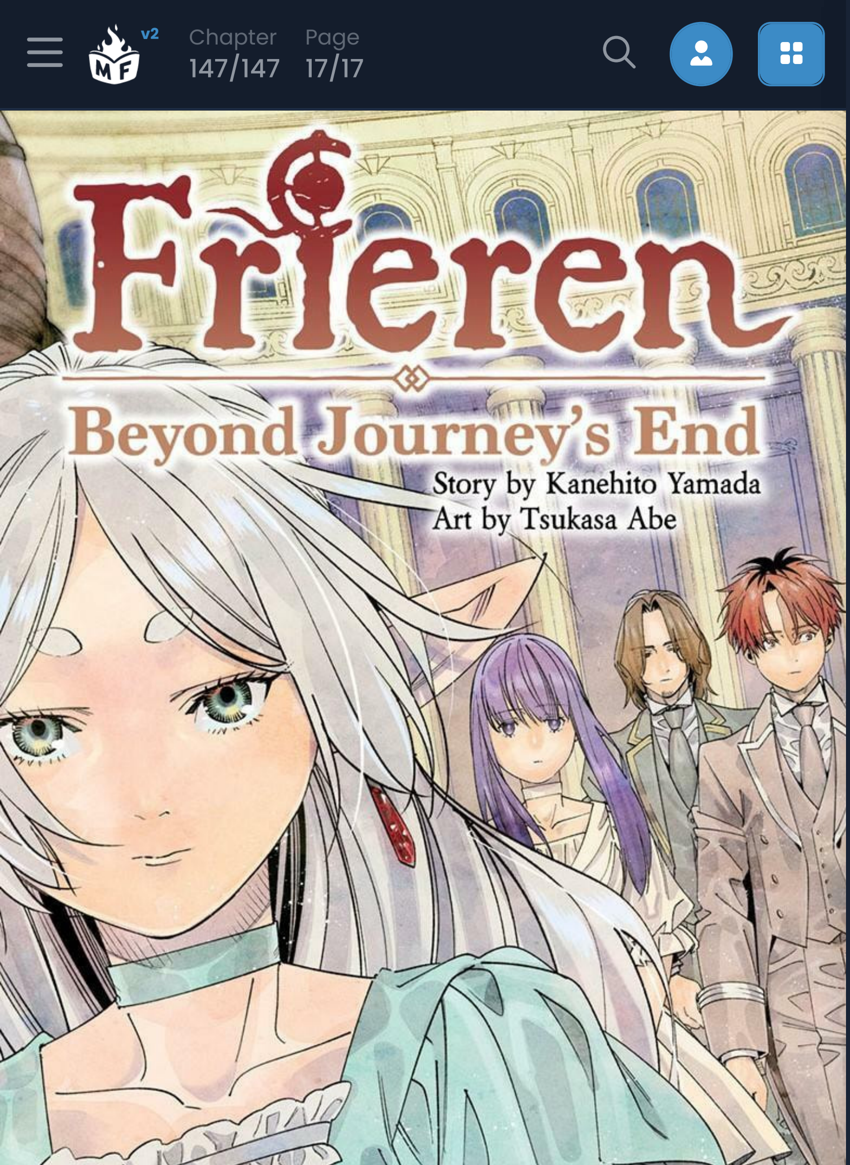
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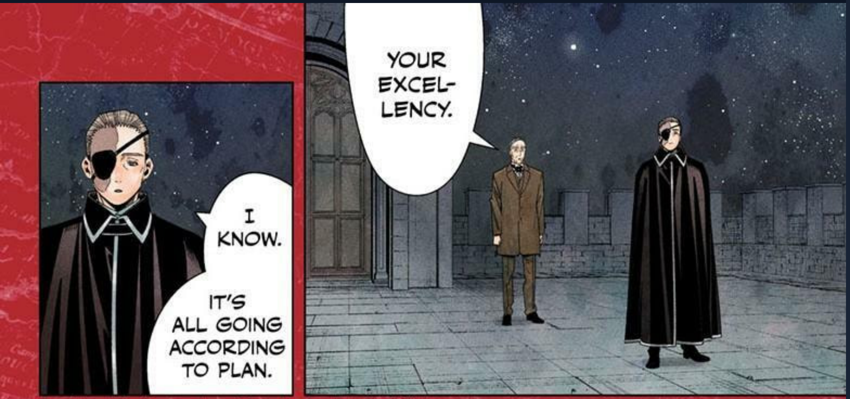
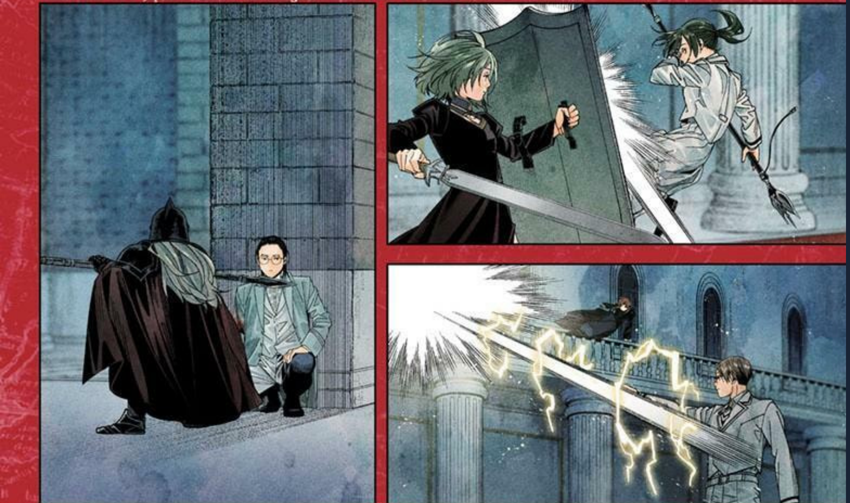
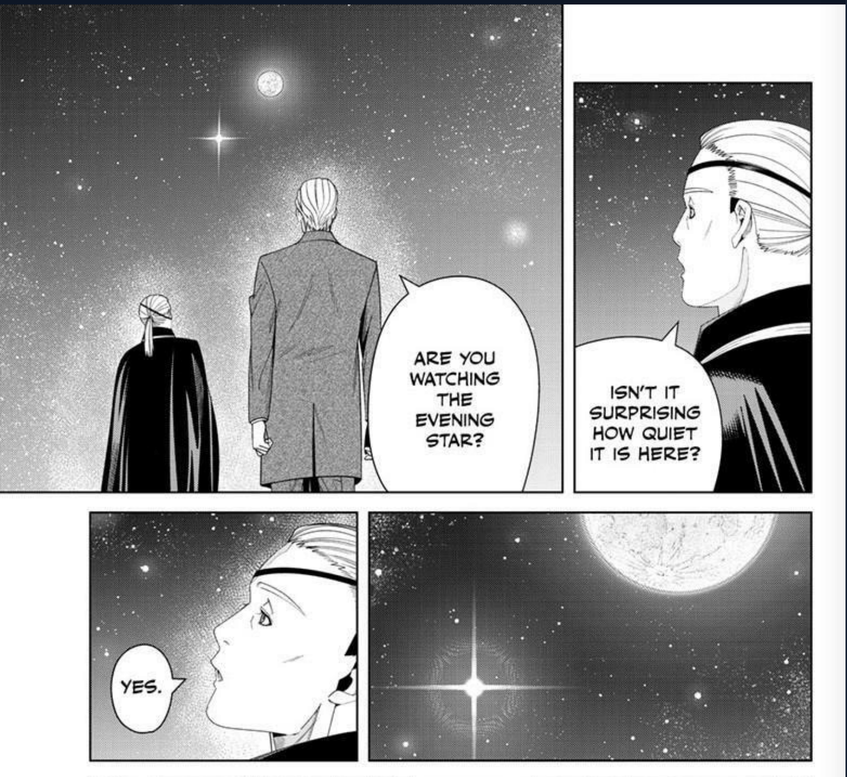
Beyond Journey's End
Story by Kanehito Yamada
Art by Tsukasa Abe

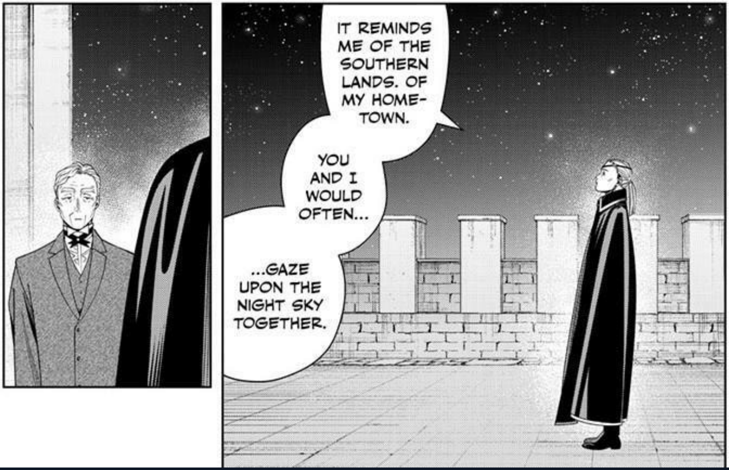
Chapter 147: The Land with No Hero

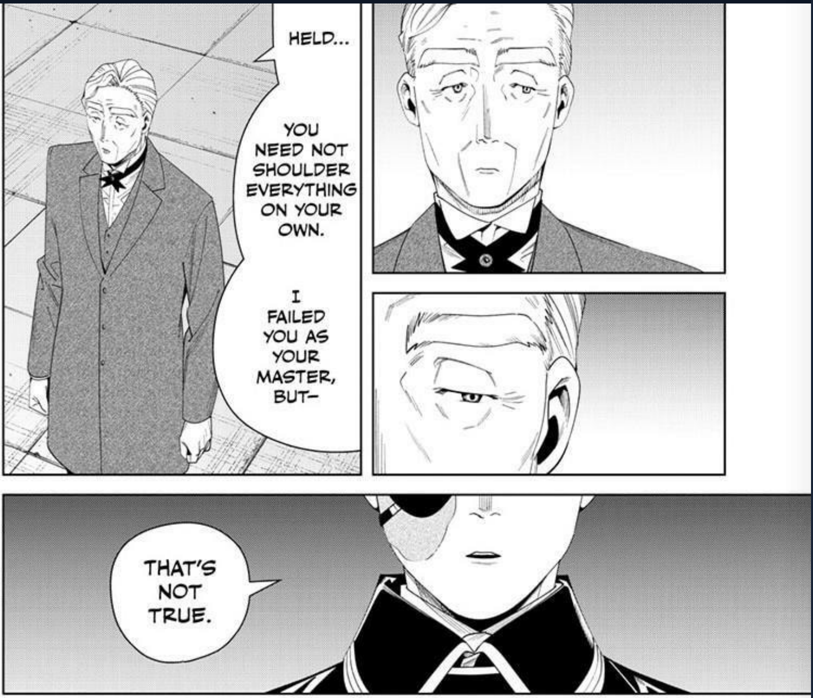

YOUR EXCELLENCY.
I KNOW.
IT'S ALL GOING ACCORDING TO PLAN.

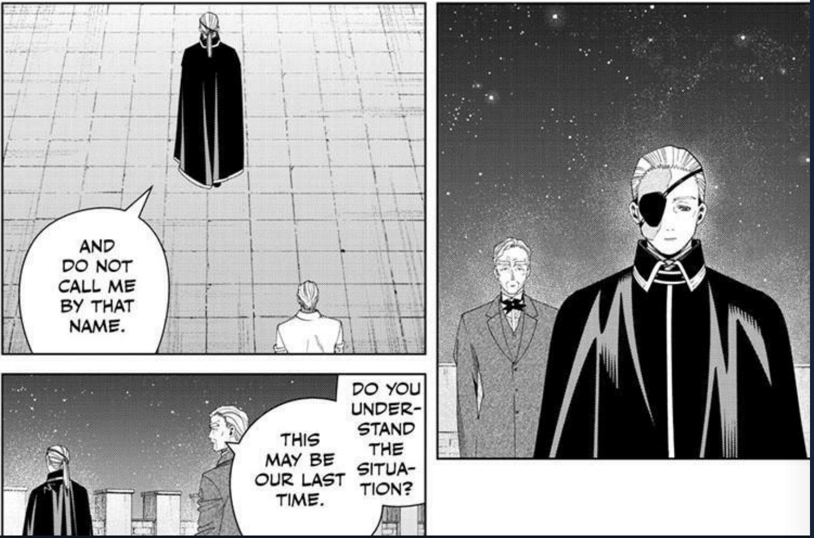
Translation: Misa 'Japanese Ammo' Lettering: Annaliese "Ace" Christman

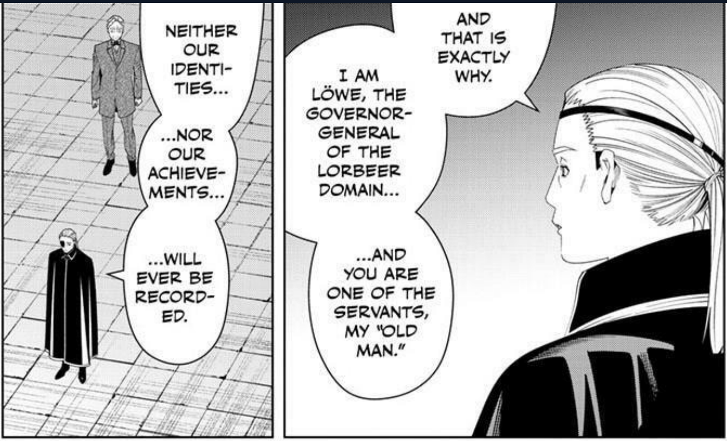


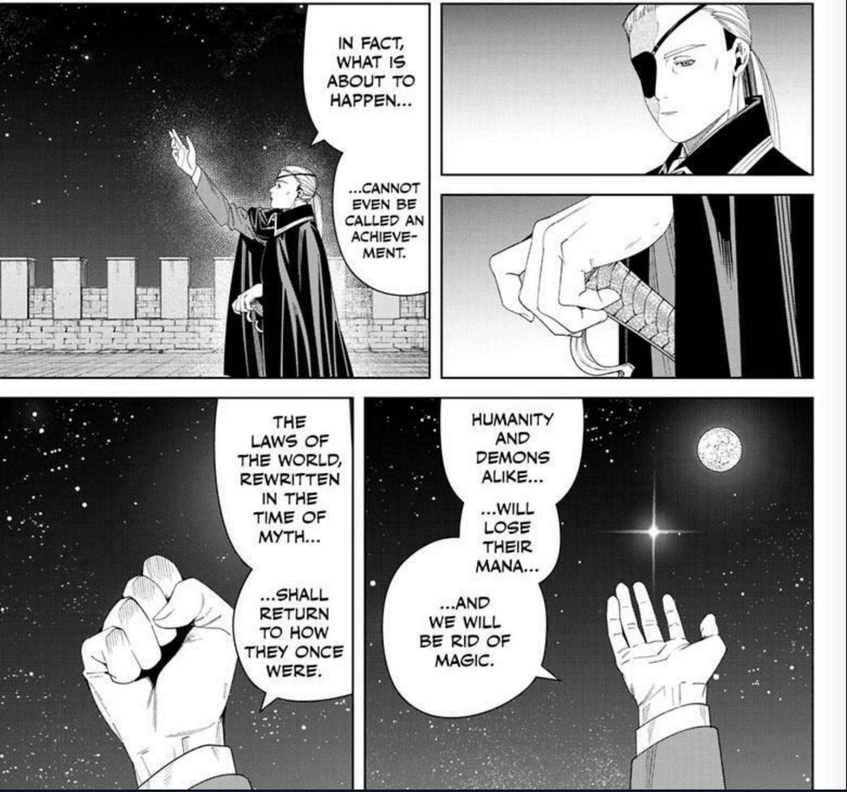

ISN'T IT SURPRISING HOW QUIET IT IS HERE?
ARE YOU WATCHING THE EVENING STAR?
YES.

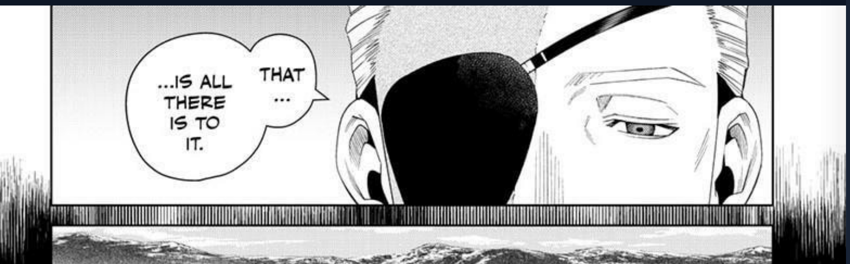

IT REMINDS ME OF THE SOUTHERN LANDS. OF MY HOMETOWN.
YOU AND I WOULD OFTEN...
...GAZE UPON THE NIGHT SKY TOGETHER.

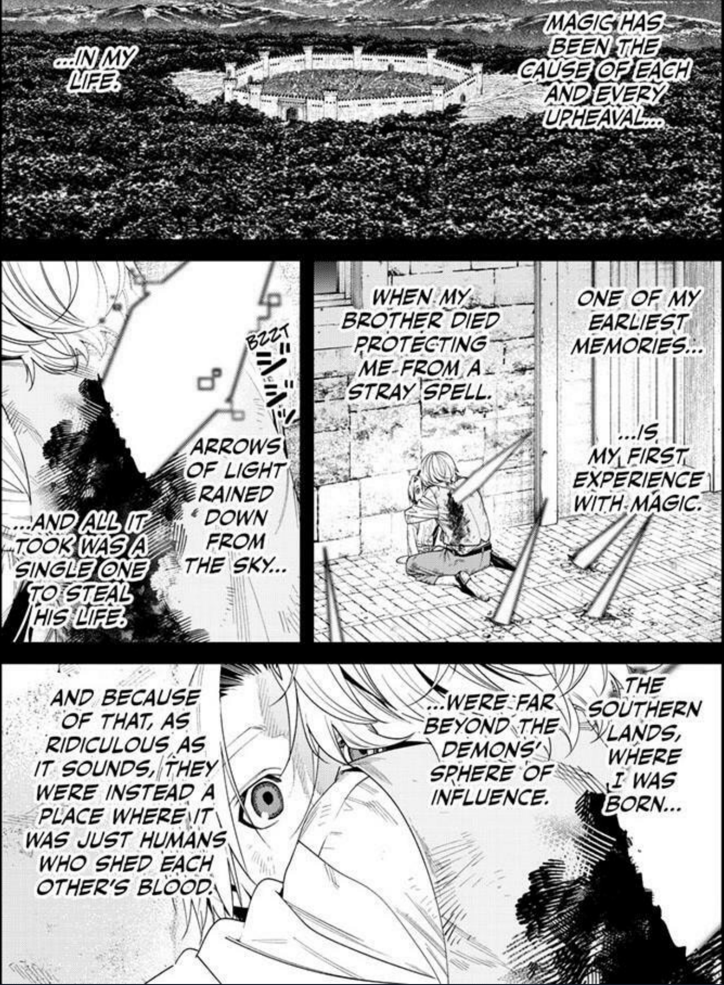

HELD...
YOU NEED NOT SHOULDER EVERYTHING ON YOUR OWN.
I FAILED YOU AS YOUR MASTER, BUT–
THAT'S NOT TRUE.

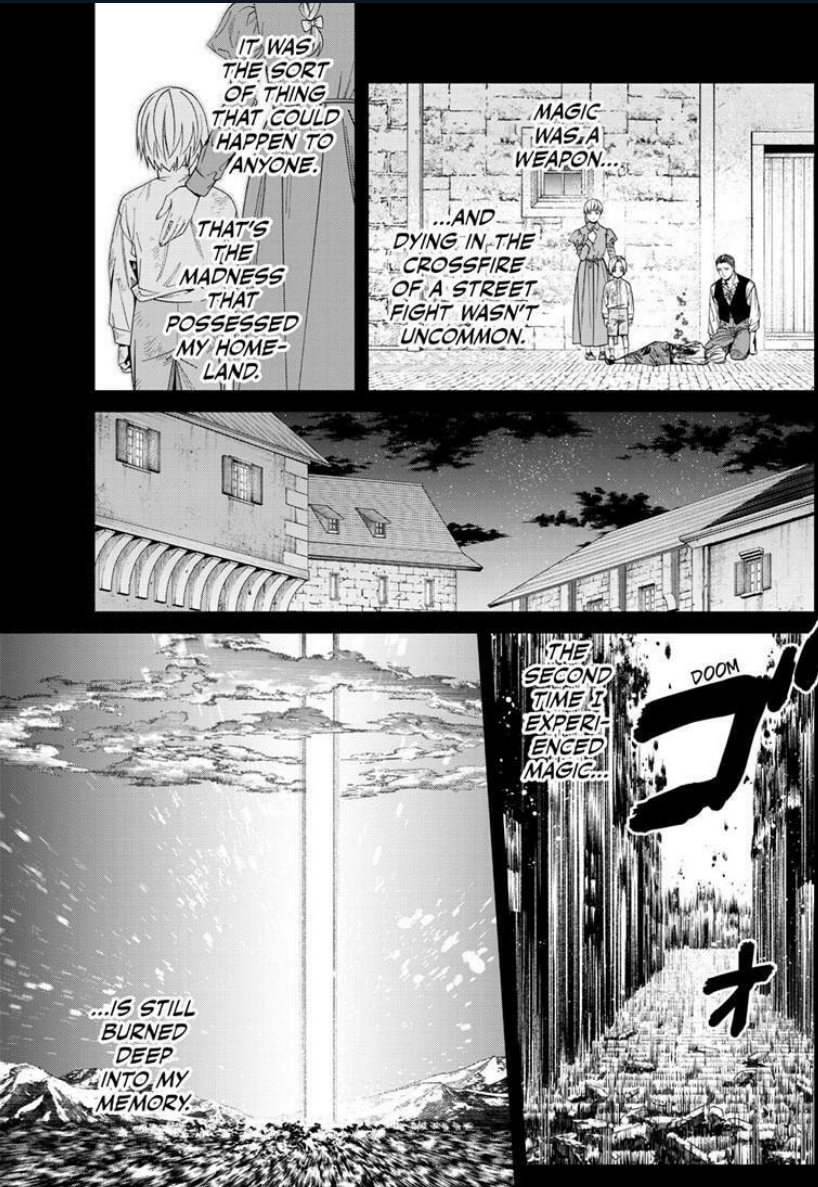

AND DO NOT CALL ME BY THAT NAME.
DO YOU UNDERSTAND THE SITUATION?
THIS MAY BE OUR LAST TIME.

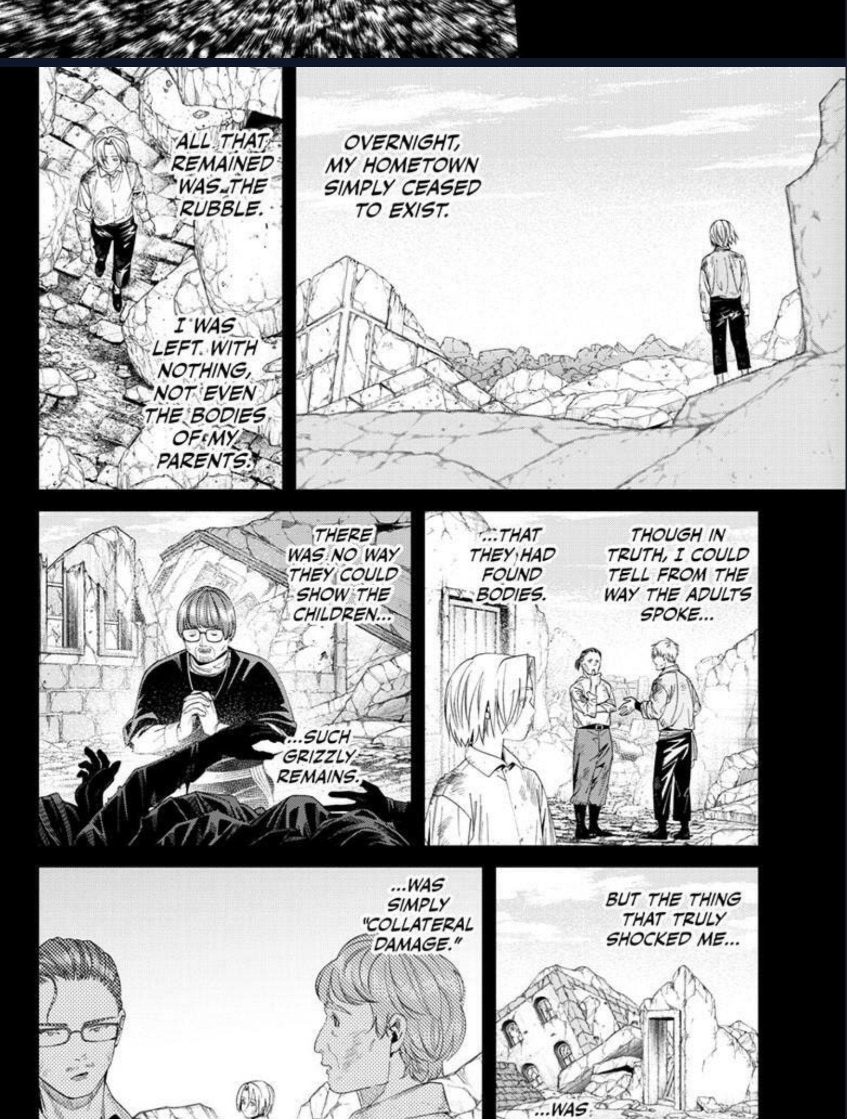

NEITHER OUR IDENTITIES...
...NOR OUR ACHIEVEMENTS...
...WILL EVER BE RECORDED.
AND THAT IS EXACTLY WHY.
I AM LÖWE, THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF THE LORBEER DOMAIN...
...AND YOU ARE ONE OF THE SERVANTS, MY "OLD MAN."

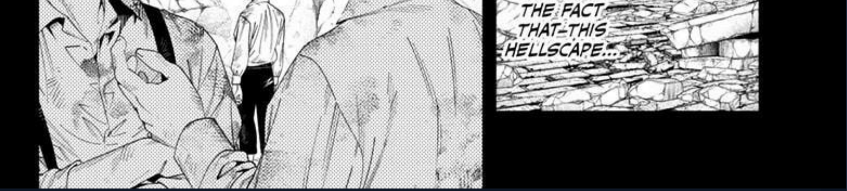

IN FACT, WHAT IS ABOUT TO HAPPEN...
...CANNOT EVEN BE CALLED AN ACHIEVEMENT.
THE LAWS OF THE WORLD, REWRITTEN IN THE TIME OF MYTH...
...SHALL RETURN TO HOW THEY ONCE WERE.
HUMANITY AND DEMONS ALIKE...
...WILL LOSE THEIR MANA...
...AND WE WILL BE RID OF MAGIC.

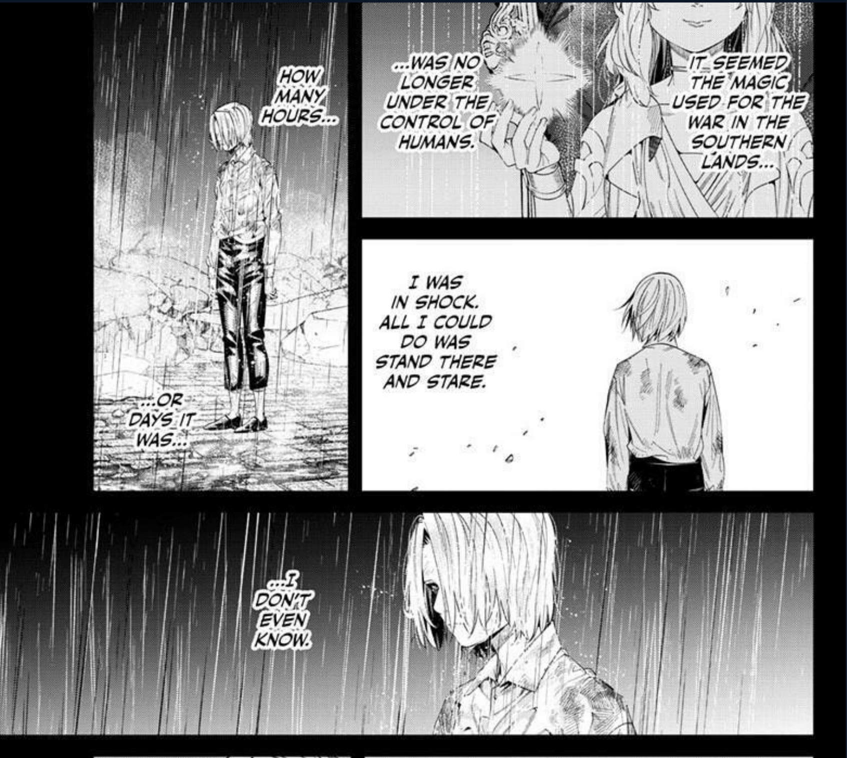

THAT ...
...IS ALL THERE IS TO IT.

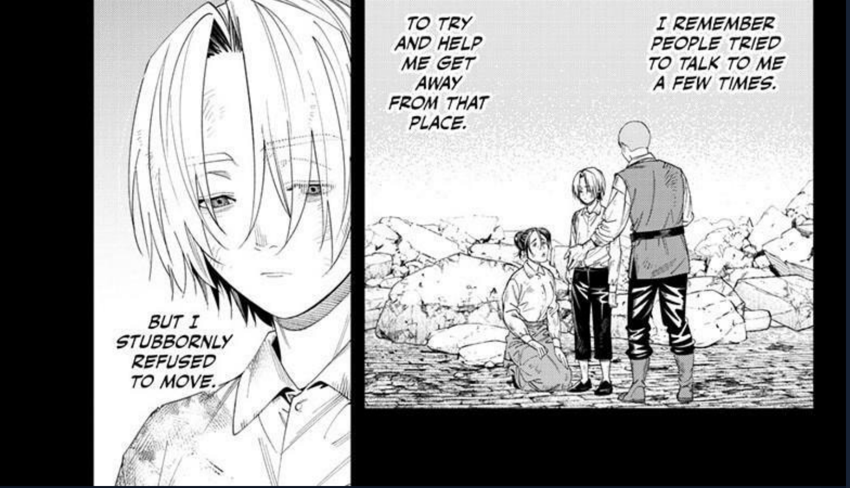

MAGIC HAS BEEN THE CAUSE OF EACH AND EVERY UPHEAVAL...
...IN MY LIFE.
ONE OF MY EARLIEST MEMORIES...
WHEN MY BROTHER DIED PROTECTING ME FROM A STRAY SPELL.
...IS MY FIRST EXPERIENCE WITH MAGIC.
BZZT
ジジジ
ARROWS OF LIGHT RAINED DOWN FROM THE SKY...
...AND ALL IT TOOK WAS A SINGLE ONE TO STEAL HIS LIFE.
THE SOUTHERN LANDS, WHERE I WAS BORN...
...WERE FAR BEYOND THE DEMONS' SPHERE OF INFLUENCE.
AND BECAUSE OF THAT, AS RIDICULOUS AS IT SOUNDS, THEY WERE INSTEAD A PLACE WHERE IT WAS JUST HUMANS WHO SHED EACH OTHER'S BLOOD.

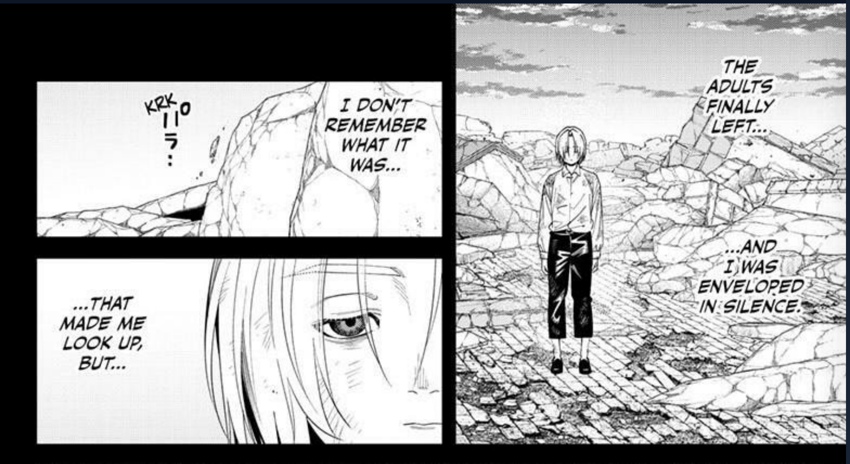

MAGIC WAS A WEAPON...
...AND DYING IN THE CROSSFIRE OF A STREET FIGHT WASN'T UNCOMMON.
IT WAS THE SORT OF THING THAT COULD HAPPEN TO ANYONE.
THAT'S THE MADNESS THAT POSSESSED MY HOMELAND.
THE SECOND TIME I EXPERIENCED MAGIC...
DOOM
ゴォ
...IS STILL BURNED DEEP INTO MY MEMORY.

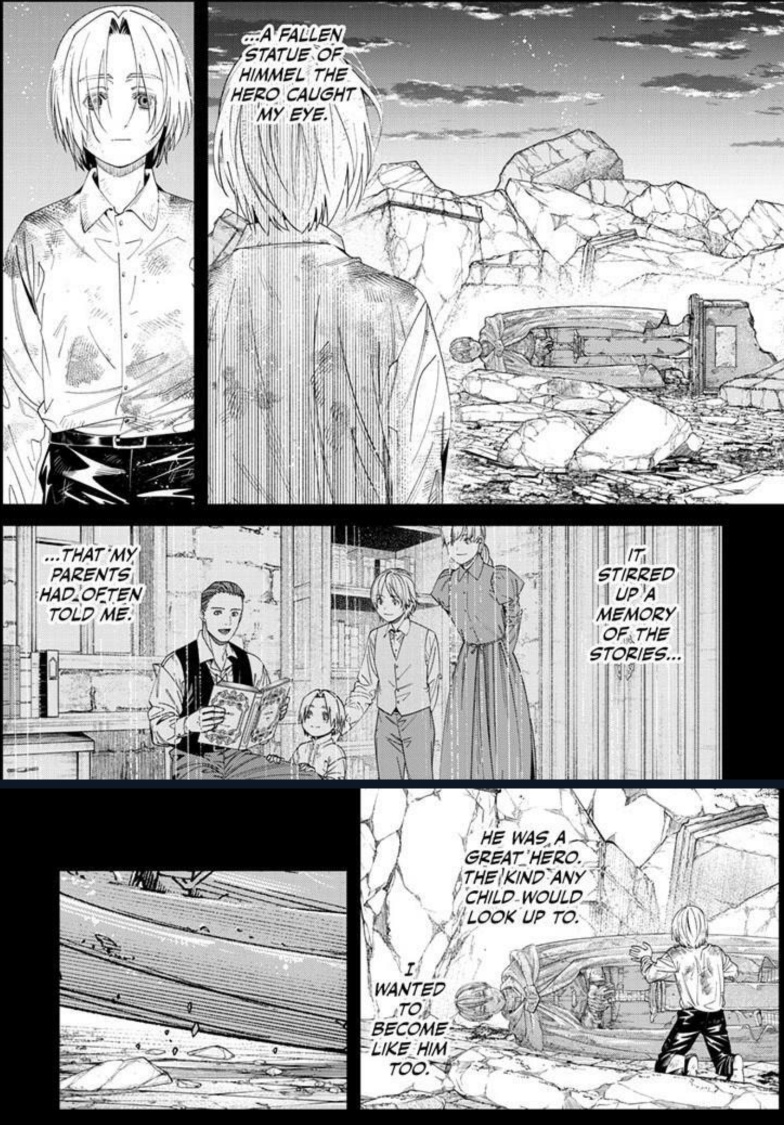

OVERNIGHT, MY HOMETOWN SIMPLY CEASED TO EXIST.
ALL THAT REMAINED WAS THE RUBBLE.
I WAS LEFT WITH NOTHING, NOT EVEN THE BODIES OF MY PARENTS.
THOUGH IN TRUTH, I COULD TELL FROM THE WAY THE ADULTS SPOKE...
...THAT THEY HAD FOUND BODIES.
THERE WAS NO WAY THEY COULD SHOW THE CHILDREN...
...SUCH GRIZZLY REMAINS.
BUT THE THING THAT TRULY SHOCKED ME...
...WAS.
...WAS SIMPLY "COLLATERAL DAMAGE."

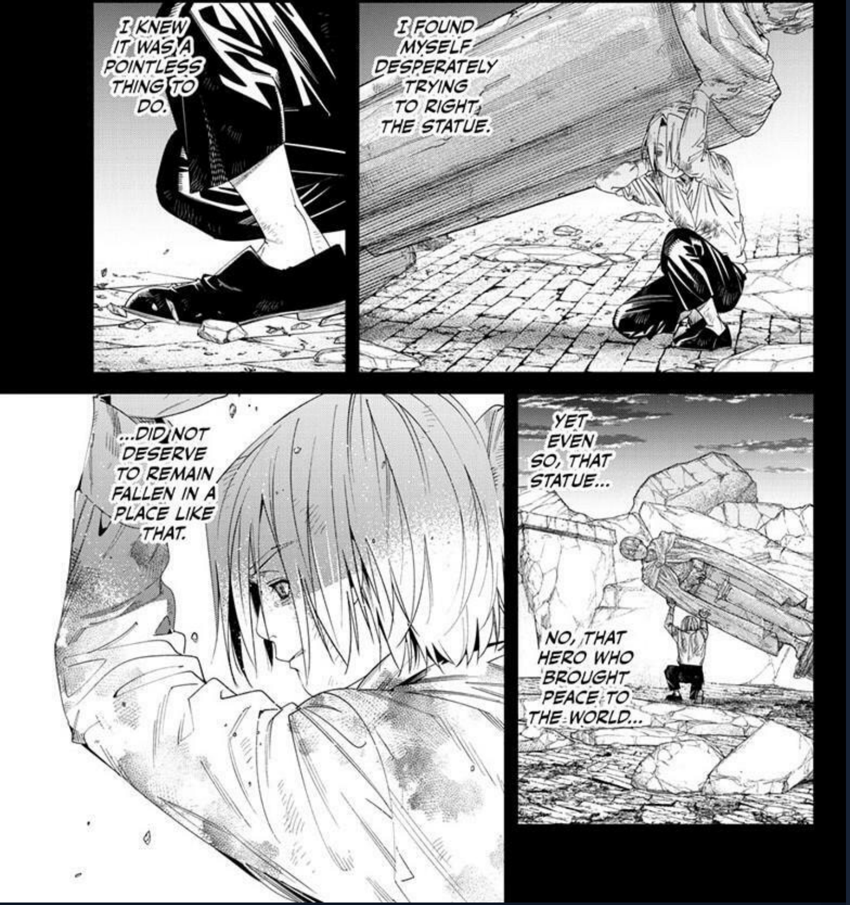

THE FACT THAT THIS HELLSCAPE...

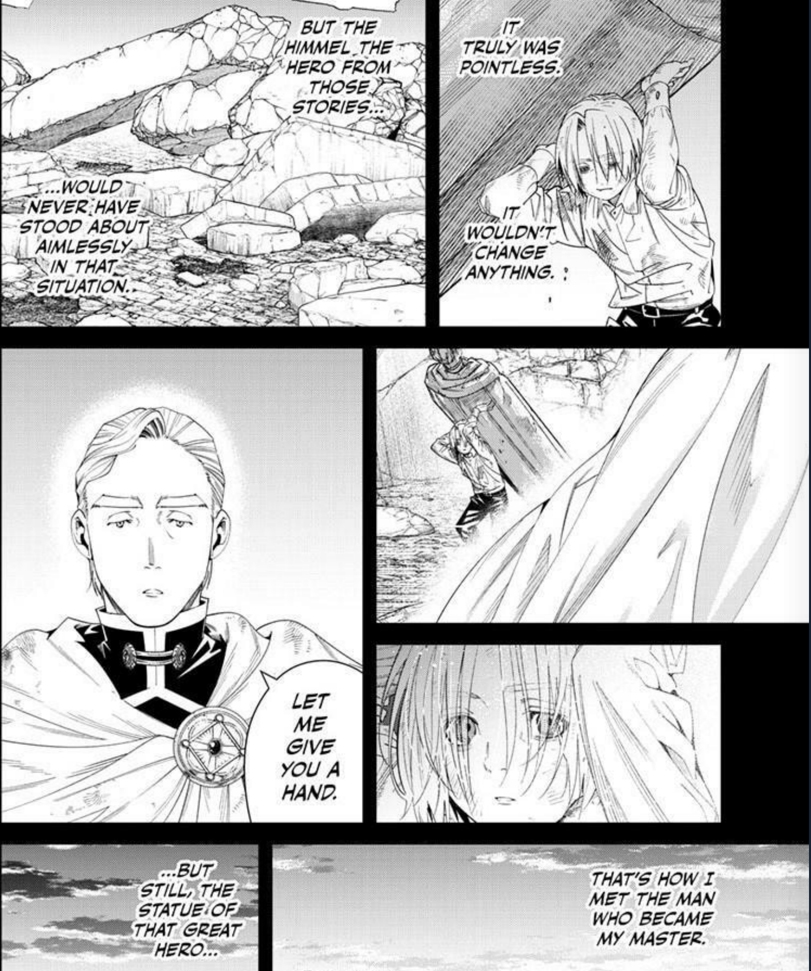

IT SEEMED THE MAGIC USED FOR THE WAR IN THE SOUTHERN LANDS...
...WAS NO LONGER UNDER THE CONTROL OF HUMANS.
I WAS IN SHOCK. ALL I COULD DO WAS STAND THERE AND STARE.
HOW MANY HOURS...
...OR DAYS IT WAS...
...I DON'T EVEN KNOW.

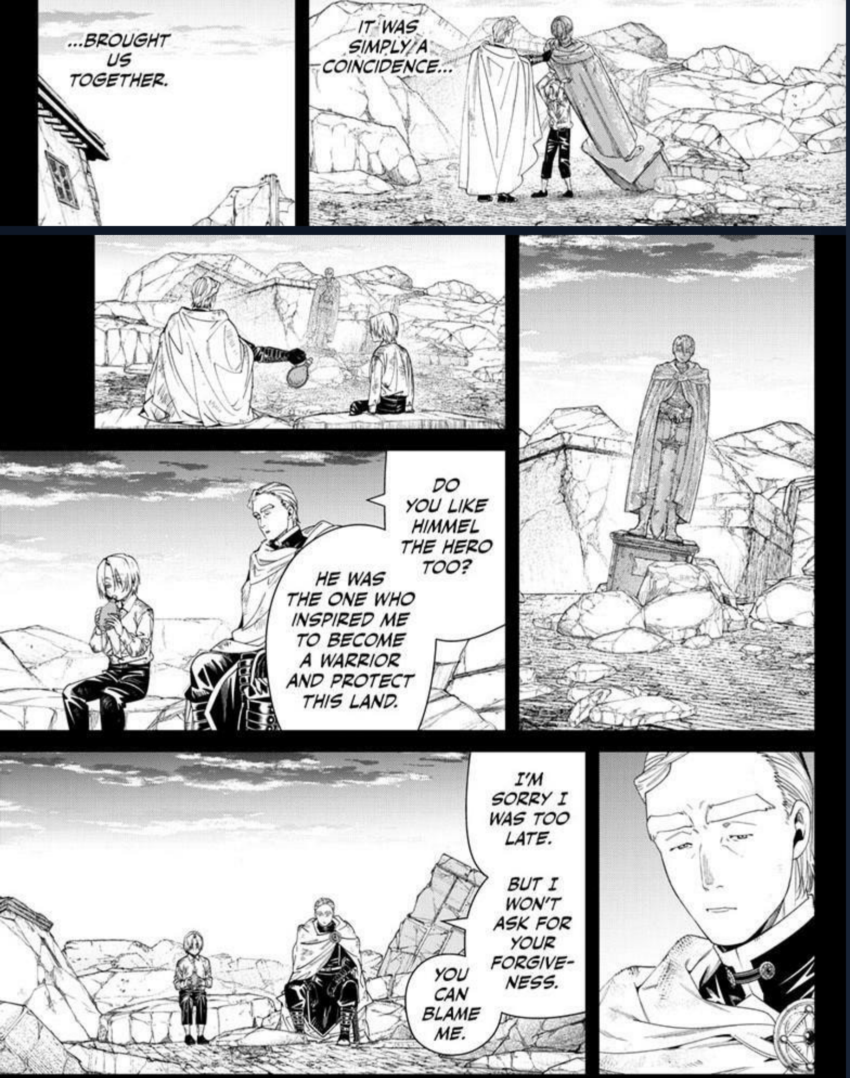

I REMEMBER PEOPLE TRIED TO TALK TO ME A FEW TIMES.
TO TRY AND HELP ME GET AWAY FROM THAT PLACE.
BUT I STUBBORNLY REFUSED TO MOVE.

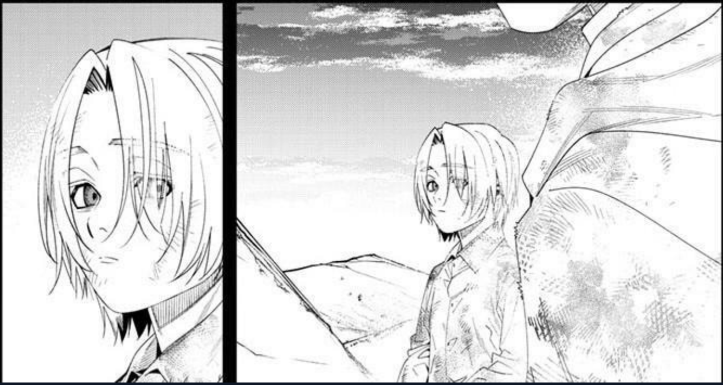

THE ADULTS FINALLY LEFT...
...AND I WAS ENVELOPED IN SILENCE.
I DON'T REMEMBER WHAT IT WAS...
KRK
パラ…
...THAT MADE ME LOOK UP, BUT...

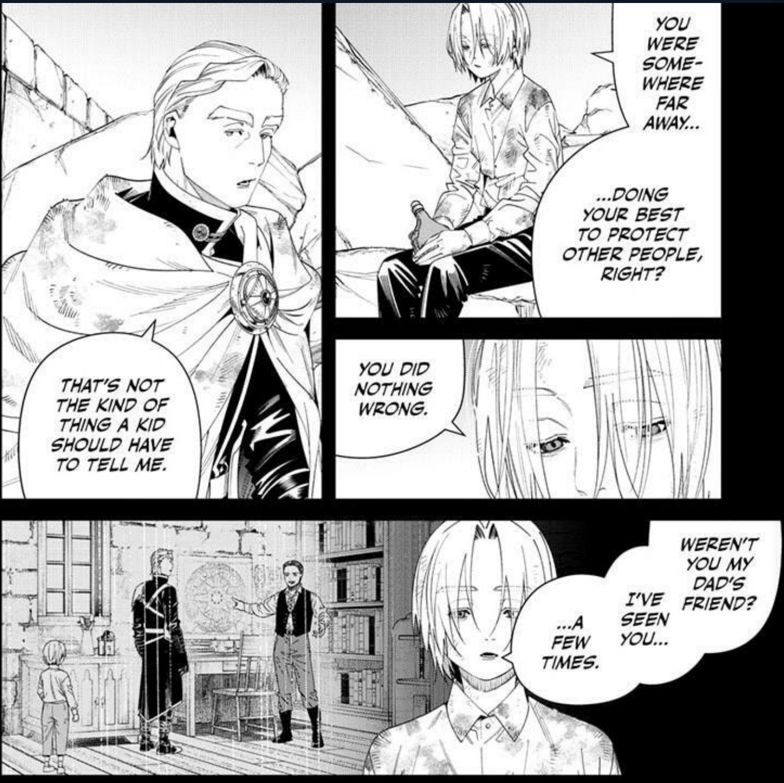

...A FALLEN STATUE OF HIMMEL THE HERO CAUGHT MY EYE.
IT STIRRED UP A MEMORY OF THE STORIES...
...THAT MY PARENTS HAD OFTEN TOLD ME.
HE WAS A GREAT HERO. THE KIND ANY CHILD WOULD LOOK UP TO.
I WANTED TO BECOME LIKE HIM TOO.

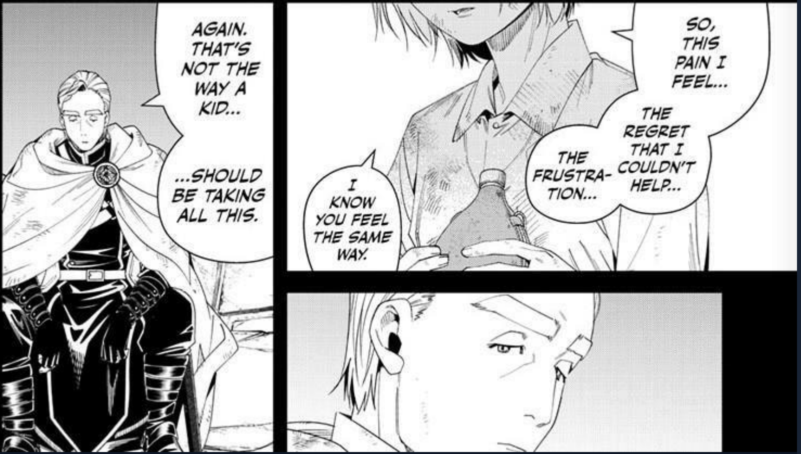

I FOUND MYSELF DESPERATELY TRYING TO RIGHT THE STATUE.
I KNEW IT WAS A POINTLESS THING TO DO.
YET EVEN SO, THAT STATUE...
NO, THAT HERO WHO BROUGHT PEACE TO THE WORLD...
...DID NOT DESERVE TO REMAIN FALLEN IN A PLACE LIKE THAT.

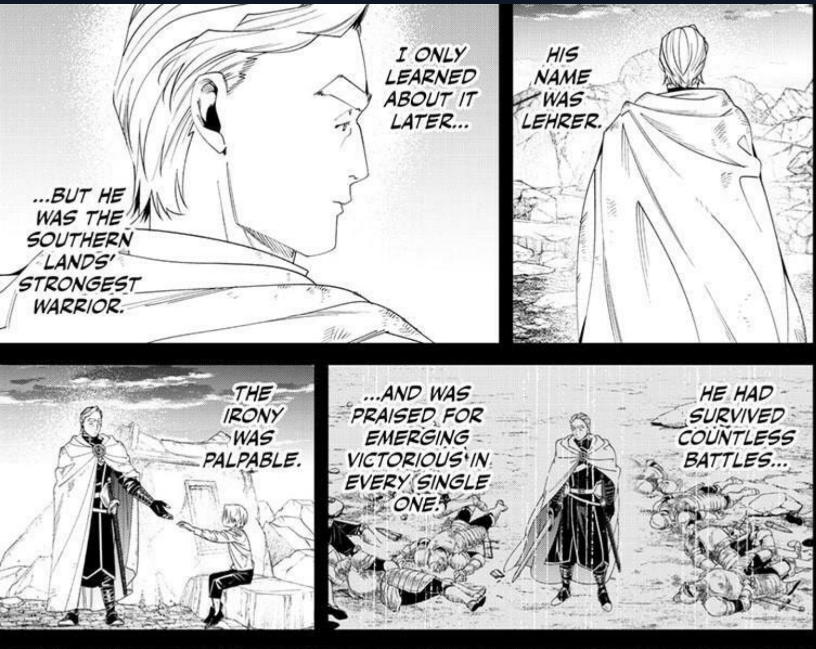

IT TRULY WAS POINTLESS.
IT WOULDN'T CHANGE ANYTHING.
BUT THE HIMMEL THE HERO FROM THOSE STORIES...
...WOULD NEVER HAVE STOOD ABOUT AIMLESSLY IN THAT SITUATION.
LET ME GIVE YOU A HAND.
THAT'S HOW I MET THE MAN WHO BECAME MY MASTER.
...BUT STILL, THE STATUE OF THAT GREAT HERO...

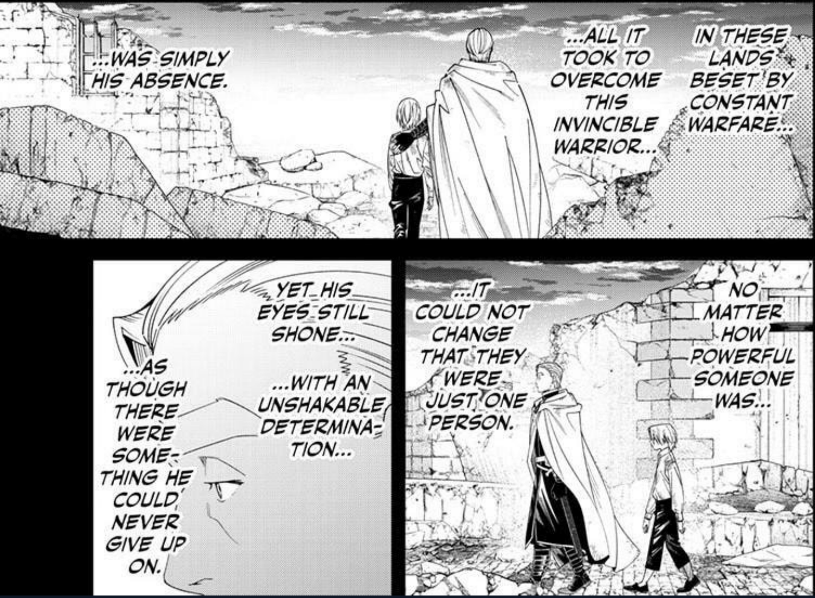

IT WAS SIMPLY A COINCIDENCE...
...BROUGHT US TOGETHER.
DO YOU LIKE HIMMEL THE HERO TOO?
HE WAS THE ONE WHO INSPIRED ME TO BECOME A WARRIOR AND PROTECT THIS LAND.
I'M SORRY I WAS TOO LATE.
BUT I WON'T ASK FOR YOUR FORGIVENESS.
YOU CAN BLAME ME.

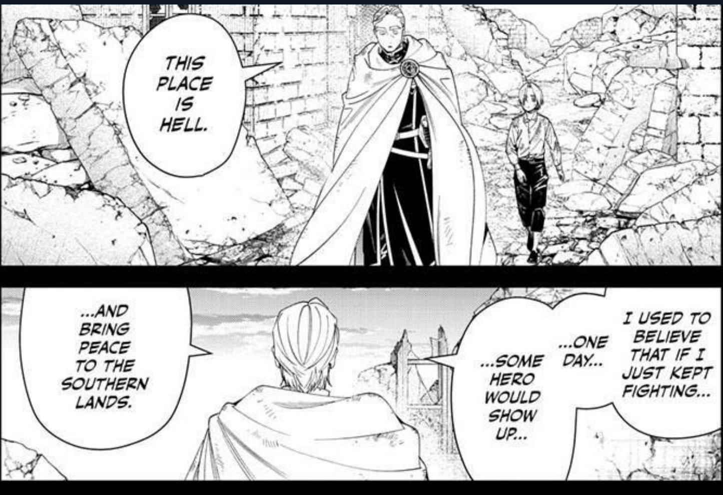


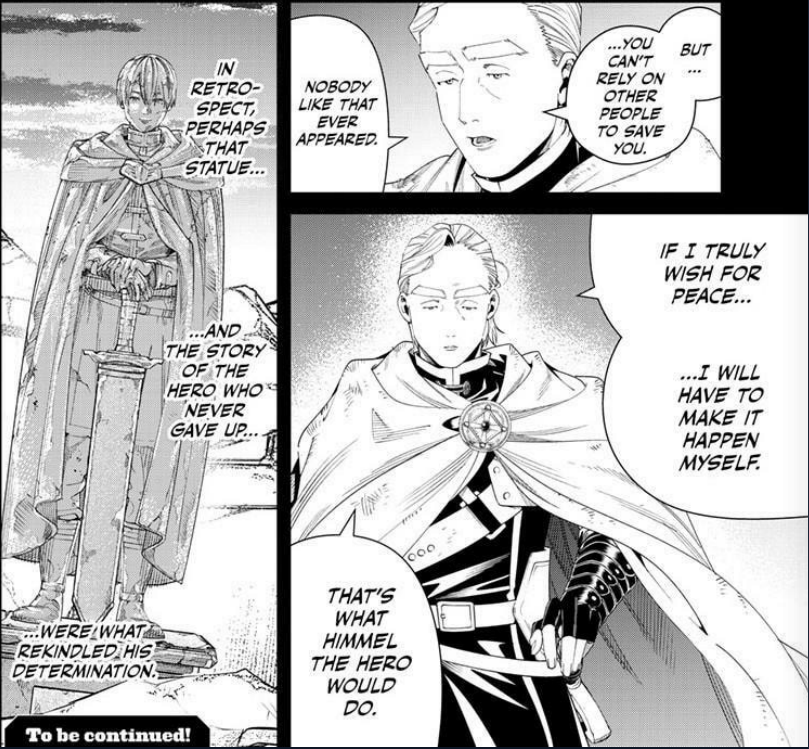

YOU WERE SOMEWHERE FAR AWAY...
...DOING YOUR BEST TO PROTECT OTHER PEOPLE, RIGHT?
YOU DID NOTHING WRONG.
THAT'S NOT THE KIND OF THING A KID SHOULD HAVE TO TELL ME.
WEREN'T YOU MY DAD'S FRIEND?
I'VE SEEN YOU...
...A FEW TIMES.


SO, THIS PAIN I FEEL...
THE REGRET THAT I COULDN'T HELP...
THE FRUSTRATION...
I KNOW YOU FEEL THE SAME WAY.
AGAIN. THAT'S NOT THE WAY A KID...
...SHOULD BE TAKING ALL THIS.


HIS NAME WAS LEHRER.
I ONLY LEARNED ABOUT IT LATER...
...BUT HE WAS THE SOUTHERN LANDS' STRONGEST WARRIOR.
HE HAD SURVIVED COUNTLESS BATTLES...
...AND WAS PRAISED FOR EMERGING VICTORIOUS IN EVERY SINGLE ONE.
THE IRONY WAS PALPABLE.


IN THESE LANDS BESET BY CONSTANT WARFARE...
...ALL IT TOOK TO OVERCOME THIS INVINCIBLE WARRIOR...
...WAS SIMPLY HIS ABSENCE.
NO MATTER HOW POWERFUL SOMEONE WAS...
...IT COULD NOT CHANGE THAT THEY WERE JUST ONE PERSON.
YET HIS EYES STILL SHONE...
...WITH AN UNSHAKABLE DETERMINATION...
...AS THOUGH THERE WERE SOMETHING HE COULD NEVER GIVE UP ON.


THIS PLACE IS HELL.
I USED TO BELIEVE THAT IF I JUST KEPT FIGHTING...
...ONE DAY...
...SOME HERO WOULD SHOW UP...
...AND BRING PEACE TO THE SOUTHERN LANDS.


NOBODY LIKE THAT EVER APPEARED.
BUT ...
...YOU CAN'T RELY ON OTHER PEOPLE TO SAVE YOU.
IF I TRULY WISH FOR PEACE...
...I WILL HAVE TO MAKE IT HAPPEN MYSELF.
THAT'S WHAT HIMMEL THE HERO WOULD DO.
IN RETRO-SPECT, PERHAPS THAT STATUE...
...AND THE STORY OF THE HERO WHO NEVER GAVE UP...
...WERE WHAT REKINDLED HIS DETERMINATION.
To be continued!

← Previous Chapter